

Bike team returns from ride across Iowa

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Kirtland AFB bicyclers promoted physical fitness and the Air Force after a week-long ride across Iowa.

This is the first year Kirtland AFB sent cyclists to join Air Force team, Team Aim High, at the Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa, July 20-27. More than 10,000 riders entered this cycle tour of the state.

The Kirtland AFB team trained for about five months preparing for the event. Each team member held their own training schedule, cycling an average of 60-100 miles a week.

"Training for this was extremely important if I wanted to have a good time," said Master Sgt. Ronald Williams, 58th Special Operations Wing. "We had to be finished no later than 5 p.m. daily and had to cover 104 miles each day. It was a little hard, but it worked."

Training also proved beneficial when several medical emergencies occurred during the ride. A colonel from Langley AFB, Va., administered CPR to a heart attack victim until the paramedics arrived.

Williams provided buddy-care to someone who crashed.

"He hit a heavy patch of gravel while riding on a short stretch of road," said Williams. "The gravel stopped his forward momentum and he flew over the handlebars landing on his face. I turned him over to the paramedics once they showed up, although he didn't seem like he wanted to go with them."

However, the focus of the ride was recruiting since Team Aim High worked with the recruiting service educating people about employment opportunities.

"We spent our days talking to the local people in each town about the benefits of Air Force life," said Williams. "We passed out keychains, stickers, pens and pencils."

"It was great meeting the people in the towns because two seconds of your time would just make



Bottom, left to right. Ron Williams, 58th Special Operations Wing; Rich Davies, Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center; Doug Vieweg, 512th Rescue Squadron; Andy Shields, 550th Special Operations Squadron; Gene Trosterud, 58th

SOW. Top left to right, Brian Pindell, 58th SOW; Jeff Leischner, 550th SOS; Jim Routt, 550th SOS; Tim Adams, AFOTEC; Shayne Halter, 58th Training Squadron; Kim Scott, AFOTEC; Tim Bell, 58th SOW.

their day," said Master Sgt. Timothy Bell, 58th Special Operations Wing. "You could see the pride in their faces. People were yelling 'Go Air Force' and cheering us on as we rode past."

However, the Iowa residents weren't the only people who took pride in their patriotism.

"Without a doubt, everyone I talked too, either on the bike or in the many small towns we passed through, people were impressed that the Air Force was here and for the sacrifices we made to be in the military," said Lt. Col. John Stout, 550th Special Operations Squadron. "I felt an overwhelming sense of pride to be in a very distinct

bicycling uniform and represent the Air Force. On several occasions, state troopers would snap to attention and give a sharp salute. I thank them always because they put their lives on the line everyday protecting the citizens of Iowa and a band of crazied bicycle riders.

What I remember the most will be the ride into Fort Madison and seeing all the people stand, clap and voice their appreciation. It made all those 450 miles worth it. I am forever thankful I was able to be a part of RAGBRAI and the U.S. Air Force Team Aim High."